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PATENT
57111-5120

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE



In re patent application of:
EDWARD J. SHOEN, SAMUEL J. SHOEN,
SRINIVASAN VENKATARAMAN, AND JOHN
A. KESTNER

Serial No. UNASSIGNED

Filed: October 19, 2001

For: AN ONLINE MARKETPLACE FOR
MOVING AND RELOCATION
SERVICES

Group Art Unit:

Examiner:

CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that this correspondence and the identified enclosures are being deposited with the U.S. Postal Service as Express Mail Post Office to addressee, postage prepaid, in an envelope addressed to : The Assistant Commissioner for Patents, Washington, D.C. 20231 on October 19, 2001.

Express Mail No. EL567076490US

By:

Rupak Nag

PETITION TO MAKE SPECIAL
UNDER 37 CFR §1.102

The Assistant Commissioner for Patents
Washington, D.C. 20231

Sir:

Applicant hereby petitions to make the above-referenced application special
under 37 CFR §1.102.

Applicants respectfully submit that all claims pending in the above-referenced application are directed to a single invention.

A pre-examination search was made by applicant's attorneys. The field of search comprised all classes. One copy of each of the following references, deemed most closely related to the subject matter encompassed by the present claims, is submitted herewith by an accompanying Information Disclosure Statement. In addition, the applicants have a good knowledge of the pertinent prior art and have provided references deemed related to the subject matter encompassed by the present claims.

1. U.S. Patent No. 5,897,620 to Walker et al.

Walker describes a system for selling an unspecified-time airline ticket for a purchased seat on an unspecified flight for a traveler-specified itinerary. Passengers can obtain reduced airfares in return for flight-time flexibility and, in return, permits airlines to fill seats that would have otherwise gone unbooked. The system permits airlines to fill otherwise empty seats in a manner that stimulates leisure travel demand while leaving the airlines underlying fare structures intact. However, Walker does not teach a marketplace where users can go to obtain a service according to their requirements and parameters.

2. U.S. Patent No. 5,794,207 to Walker et al.

Walker teaches a method and apparatus for a bilateral buyer-driven commerce system. A prospective buyer of goods or services communicates a binding purchase offer globally to potential sellers and sellers search for relevant buyer purchase offers. When a seller finds an offer from a buyer, the seller can potentially bind the buyer to a contract based on the buyer's purchase offer. The buyer puts out an offer which, if accepted, without prior notification to the buyer, is binding on the buyer if the seller accepts the offer.

Walker does not teach a marketplace in which a customer searches for a relevant service, browses ratings and previous customer feedback of a particular vendor, and selects a vendor based on the customer's parameters and requirements of the service needed.

3. PCT Application No. WO 01/15050 A1 filed by ELANCE, Inc.

Elanca describes a method for buying and selling services online that includes a process for custom services, a commodity process and a collaborative workspace on a website. The site teaches the posting by a buyer of a service having specific criteria, the bidding by a seller to perform the service, and the selection of a seller by the buyer. Elance does not teach a customer entering an online marketplace to search for a service by browsing a listing of vendors providing the service, selecting a vendor, and pre-paying for the service where the payment is held in an escrow account by the host of the marketplace.

4. Internet Web Site: www.moving.com

The web site www.moving.com offers moving services and goods. A user can view informational content on vendors of moving services and goods. The site does not enable a user to complete a transaction with the vendor and only basic contact information and rates are displayed to the user. The site does not teach a customer viewing subjective information such as previous customer feedback and ratings of vendors and does not teach completing a transaction with a vendor, which can include pre-paying for the service in the marketplace and having the host arrange for escrow services.

5. Internet Web Site: www.move.com

The web site www.move.com offers informational content on moving and relocating. A user can view tips and advice on moving and relocating to a new area. The site does not allow users to complete transactions for moving services and does not provide

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listings of vendors showing subjective information about the vendor from previous customers.

Copies of each of the references and publications listed are provided with an Information Disclosure Statement accompanying this Petition and Application and are thereby made of record.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge the payment of the fee required to Deposit Account No. 10-0440. A duplicate copy of the Petition is enclosed herewith.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: October 19, 2001



RUPAK NAG
Reg. No. 37,499

JEFFER, MANGELS, BUTLER & MARMARO
Tenth Floor
2121 Avenue of the Stars
Los Angeles, CA 90067
Tel: (310) 203-8080